Name: _____ Date: _____

Lesson 4: Text c

Directions: Read the following text. Then answer questions 1 through 3.

Octopus's Garden

Rene Ebersole went scuba diving in the Pacific Ocean off Costa Rica to help a scientist learn more about the native octopuses there.

by Rene Ebersole

Anxiously waiting beneath warm, blue tropical water for the creature to ooze from its den, I feel my heart pound as one purplish, sucker-lined arm emerges from under a rock. Then another arm emerges, and another, and another. Then comes a gelatinous head, topped by two beady eyes.

I wait a few more seconds, take a deep breath, and grab the octopus. It squishes and squirms in my hands and shoots a cloud of black ink at me. I can no longer see the eight-armed invertebrate, but I can feel it slipping from my grip. Under the cover of its inky cloud, the octopus retreats deep into its den.

Normally, I don't harass octopuses. This encounter was purely for the sake of science. I recently took an expedition to a remote Costa Rican island to assist a scientist with his octopus research.

Treasure Island

The leader of our expedition was marine biologist John Cigliano. A marine biologist is a scientist who studies life-forms in the sea.

Every year, fishermen harvest thousands of the strange sea creatures from the islands' waters to satisfy a growing global appetite for octopus in salads, sauces, sautes, and sushi. Cigliano fears that if fishermen harvest too many octopuses, some species might vanish.

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(Continued)

Chameleons of the Sea

I donned a wet suit and scuba gear and dived into the waters of the Pacific; the bubbles from my regulator made a constant glug, glug, glug as I crawled along the seafloor, overturning shells and rocks and peering into crevices. Like circus contortionists, octopuses can hide in or under anything.

Octopuses are also wizards of disguise. An octopus can change its skin color to match most backgrounds. The secret of that camouflage, or disguise, is thousands of specialized elastic skin cells, called chromatophores, each of which contains a pigment (coloring agent).

Escape Artists

Despite the octopus's clever camouflage and its ability to fit into tight places, our group managed to find a few octopuses almost every time we plunged into the water. But catching an octopus was harder than finding one.

Octopuses are like magicians. They can get out of just about anything. And they produce a smoke screen to cover their escape. When threatened, an octopus releases a cloud of dark ink. The ink is a mixture of melanin, seawater, and mucus. Melanin is a brownish-black pigment that also exists in human hair and skin. Though dozens of octopuses eluded our team of hunters, we managed to capture almost 20 individuals during our stay on San Jose Island.

The information harvested from the animals our team captured will help Cigliano determine whether fishing is a serious threat to Costa Rica's octopuses. "Octopuses are fascinating animals," said Cigliano. "When you look at them, they look back at you. You know there's something behind those eyes."

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Name: _____ Date: _____

Lesson 4: Practice Test c

Chunking Long Sentences

Directions: Use "Octopus's Garden" to answer the questions.

1. **This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then answer Part B.**

   Part A: Circle the word that describes how the author feels as she waits for the octopus.

A) calm

B) nervous

C) joyful

D) bored

Part B: Use evidence from the text to tell how you know the answer in Part A. Write your answer in the space provided.

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(Continued)

2. Circle the sentence from the text that best supports the idea that octopuses are "wizards of disguise."

A) "An octopus can change its skin color to match most backgrounds."

B) "Like circus contortionists, octopuses can hide in or under anything."

C) "Under the cover of its inky cloud, the octopus retreats deep into its den."

D) "The secret of that camouflage, or disguise, is thousands of specialized elastic skin cells . . ."

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(Continued)

3. **This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then answer Part B.**

   Part A: Circle the statement that tells why John Cigliano studies octopuses.

A) to find out how they survive

B) to discover how many species live near Costa Rica

C) to determine whether fishing is a threat to octopuses

D) to find ways to provide octopuses for the growing market

Part B: Why do you think the author includes Cigliano's own words in the last paragraph? Give evidence to support your idea. Write your answer in the space provided.

_____

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